Turner to Cézanne

Masterpieces from the Davies Collection
National Museum Wales

Resource for Educators

American Federation of Arts

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Exhibition Itinerary

Columbia Museum of Art, Columbia, South Carolina
March 6–June 7, 2009

Oklahoma City Museum of Art, Oklahoma
June 25–September 20, 2009

Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York
October 9, 2009–January 3, 2010

Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C
January 30–April 25, 2010

The Albuquerque Museum of Art & History, New Mexico
May 16–August 8, 2010

Design/Production: Emily Lessard

Front cover: Paul Cézanne, *The François Zola Dam* (detail), ca. 1877–78 (no. 2)
Back cover: Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *La Parisienne*, 1874 (no. 9)

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Art can be a great source of inspiration for students. The aim of this resource is to facilitate the process of looking at and understanding the development of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist art and, more specifically, to help teachers interpret the works in the exhibition. Educators can utilize these materials in conjunction with a class visit to the exhibition or independently. The discussion questions focus on a selection of works from the exhibition and offer ways of making these works more accessible to students. They are designed to engage students, to get them to look at and analyze art. Students should be encouraged to make connections among various works of art, to establish links with topics and concepts they are studying in school, and to express their ideas about the works of art in this resource and about art in general. The discussion questions and classroom activities can be adapted for use with students of any age. In order to gain a better understanding of the works in this exhibition, students should familiarize themselves with the words in the glossary. These words are bolded when they appear for the first time in the resource text.

This Resource for Educators was prepared by Suzanne Elder Burke, AFA Director of Education, with the assistance of Molly Cygan, former AFA Assistant Educator, and Ashley Lerner, AFA Education Intern. Michaelyn Mitchell, AFA Director of Publications and Communications, edited the text and supervised the design with the assistance of Amy Mazzariello, Publications and Communications Assistant. The informational texts are drawn from the catalogue entries by Bryony Dawkes and Bethany McIntyre in the exhibition catalogue, *Turner to Cézanne: Masterpieces from the Davies Collection, National Museum Wales* (New York: American Federation of Arts in association with Hudson Hills Press, 2009). The text for "Art Historical Context—Nineteenth-Century French Painting" is drawn from Belinda Thomson's essay in *Millet to Matisse—Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century French Painting from Kelvingrove Art Gallery, Glasgow* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press in association with Glasgow Museums, 2002), a book published in conjunction with an exhibition organized by the American Federation of Arts and Glasgow Museums.

Remarkable for its breadth and the quality of its works, the Davies collection at National Museum Wales is an extraordinary group of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century paintings assembled between 1908 and 1923 by sisters Margaret and Gwendoline Davies. *Turner to Cézanne* explores the development of the collection and, in so doing, reveals the crosscurrents between artists and movements that propelled nineteenth-century painting forward. The result is a visually stunning survey of the evolution of modern art from the romantic naturalism of Turner to the **Post-Impressionism** of Cézanne.

Gwendoline (1882–1951) and Margaret (1884–1963) Davies were the granddaughters of David Davies, a self-made man who built much of the railway system in mid-Wales. Brought up in a strict, religious Welsh tradition, the sisters were acutely aware of the responsibility that came with their inheritance of Davies's fortune. In addition to supporting a wide range of social causes, they were also passionate about using their wealth to enhance the cultural life of Wales.

The story of art that can be traced through this exhibition begins with the British master Joseph Mallord William Turner, whose late work—with its emphasis on first-hand observation, loose, painterly brushwork, and atmospheric effects—presages modern painting. Turner's willingness to break with the mandates of mimesis, or exact copying of nature, was nothing short of revolutionary and would later have a tremendous impact on the Impressionists, particularly Claude Monet.

In France, Turner's Romantic naturalism was paralleled in the work of the artists of the **Barbizon school**. Breaking from the traditions of classical landscape painting established in the seventeenth century, the Barbizon painters, led by Camille Corot, left their studios to paint **en plein air**. Working outdoors and directly in front of their subjects, these artists produced small-scale landscapes that sparkled with a fresh sense of observation, naturalism, and intimacy. The Barbizon school, although misunderstood in its own day and perceived as somewhat conservative in ours, was integral to the rise of modern art. With their emphasis on first-hand experience and their mandate that artists quit the studio and leave biblical and classical subjects behind, Barbizon painters such as Corot opened the door to a new realism in French art.

Both personal taste and visual appeal played key roles in the evolution of the Davies collection, yet the clear connections among the various works acquired by the sisters—particularly the inclusion of British artists such

as Matthew Smith and Richard Bevan, whose work responds to French modernism—suggest an astute and informed understanding of nineteenth-century painting. As collectors, Gwendoline and Margaret initially favored Turner, Barbizon landscapes, and **academic** genre paintings, but they moved increasingly toward progressive art. They purchased works by Jean-François Millet that reflected the new appreciation of the creative act itself and an elevation of scenes of modern life to primary importance.

Also pivotal in the history of nineteenth-century art is the work of Edouard Manet. Manet followed Corot's precedent by working on the spot and *sur le motif*, or from the subject (there is no discernible underdrawing in the work), and Manet's work is an early instance of the spontaneity and direct observation that characterize **Impressionism**. Manet's *Effect of Snow at Petit-Montrouge,* believed to be his first "Impressionist" scene, was among the first Impressionist works purchased by the sisters. Gwendoline and Margaret's interest in Monet was unique among British collectors. They particularly favored the late works, in which color, light, and textured brushstrokes combine to form a poetic abstraction that marks the apex of Impressionism. Alongside these landscapes and outdoor views, the exhibition includes works that reflect Impressionism's emphasis on contemporary life, such as Renoir's *La Parisienne* (no. 9). The exhibition culminates with several Post-Impressionist works, including paintings by Cézanne and van Gogh.

From their prescient acquisition of the late Turners to major purchases of works by Cézanne and van Gogh, the sisters amassed one of the earliest and most extensive collections of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist art in Britain at a time when such art was ignored by individuals and institutions alike. It has long been assumed that the sisters relied heavily on various advisers, but recent research reveals a high level of independence on the part of both sisters. The unique character of the collection itself, with its specific themes and concerns, suggests that the sisters were in fact collecting within a very personal set of criteria reflecting not only their artistic experiences but also their upbringing, education, beliefs, and outlook. By focusing on the evolution of their magnificent collection, particularly the manner in which the paintings in it work as counterpoints to each other, *Turner to Cézanne* offers a compelling survey of the art of the nineteenth century.

Prior to the revolution of 1789, standards in French art had been dictated by the French Academy, whose members and students regularly displayed their work at the Salon, a public exhibition held in Paris, usually in April or May, biennially at first, then annually. Through its complex hierarchy of awards and critical attention, the Salon offered a young artist a progression of steps and goals for developing a career. For most artists, it was the best way to achieve commissions and public acclaim.

As the century advanced, however, increasing numbers of artists whose works were not accepted by the Salon found that they could gain visibility and build a career by exhibiting independently. This realization, along with dissatisfaction with the official Academy system, led to the periodic staging of a Salon des Refusés (Salon of the Refused)—famously in 1863, for example, when Edouard Manet and Claude Monet caused a sensation with their work—but it was not until 1884 and 1890 that France saw the establishment of two alternative exhibitions, the Salon des Indépendants and the Salon de la Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts, respectively.

With expanded exhibition opportunities came a relaxation of standards and hierarchies. Up until the latter part of the nineteenth century, the purpose and status of art had been defined within a distinct hierarchy. History painting—with morally uplifting allegorical or biblical subjects involving heroic figures—was at the pinnacle of artistic achievement and still life at the bottom, with portraiture, landscape, and genre scenes on a descending scale between. By the mid-nineteenth century, traditional heroic themes from the Bible, classical literature, and history were increasingly replaced by anecdotal episodes from history and themes from daily life. Because they were understandable by all, these subjects were judged to be better suited to the modern democratic age. With the gradual acceptance from the 1850s onward of less elevated subjects, the ground was laid for the radicalism of the works of Manet and the Impressionists, who in the 1860s and 1870s produced "some of the most daring, light-filled, fresh landscapes and modern figure subjects France had yet seen."[1]

During the 1880s, a number of artists departed from the practice of recording what they saw and instead advocated the legitimacy of distortion and color-use as a means of expressing emotion and decorative beauty. These **avant-garde** artists set the groundwork for the movement that would retrospectively earn the name Post-Impressionism. The Post-Impressionists—among them,

1. Vivien Hamilton, *Millet to Matisse: Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century French Painting from Kelvingrove Art Gallery, Glasgow* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press in association with Glasgow Museums, 2002), p. 1.

Paul Cézanne, Paul Gauguin, and Vincent van Gogh—were inspired by their surroundings, but, unlike the Impressionists, they reordered the elements of the natural world to suit their own artistic objectives. Roger Fry, the British art critic who coined the term Post-Impressionism, explained that these artists produced "arrangements of form and color … calculated to stir the imagination."[2] The first decade of the twentieth century ushered in **Fauvism**, which explored the expressive power of vibrant color, followed by Cubism, with its shifting, multiple viewpoints and structural complexity. Liberated from their traditional function as objective recorders, the painters associated with these new movements were becoming increasingly interested in the manipulation of reality for expressive effect.

In France, the latter half of the nineteenth century represents an apex in western painting. Probably the key aesthetic disjunction with tradition came with the acceptance of the doctrine of "art for art's sake," which focused on the formal qualities of works of art—shapes, colors, and compositional structure—in and of themselves, rather than merely as a means to represent reality or fulfill moral or didactic purposes. The new art of the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists, which paved the way for subsequent generations of artists, was deemed to exist for its own sake and proclaimed the supremacy of nature, articulated through light, color, and form.

2. Roger Fry, "Post Impressionism," *Fortnightly Review* 95 (December 1911): 857–58.

1. Photography was invented in 1839. What impact do you think this technological development had on artists?

2. The Impressionists broke with academic painting traditions to depict scenes from everyday life. Why do you think some people at the time were unsupportive of this subject matter? Why do you think these artists chose to depart from the Academy?

3. Do you think art challenges society? If so, how?

4. Do you think art is a reflection of the time and place in which it is created? How and why?

5. Consider the textures of the paintings in this exhibition. Can you tell where the artists have used thin paint? Thick paint?

6. Many of the artists in this exhibition knew each other. Do you think these relationships had an impact on the work of the individual artists? Why?

7. How do these works relate to one another? How are they similar? How are they different? Describe the effect of viewing these paintings as a group. Do you think it would be different to see them individually?

Warm-up Activity: Observing the Details

Aim: To observe the details in a painting and understand how meaning is suggested through them; to understand that looking at a work of art takes time and patience and requires careful observation.

Materials: digital projector, paper, pencil

Procedure:

1. Show one of the images in this resource to your students for one minute and then turn off the projector.
2. Have students make a list of all the details they saw in the painting, such as objects, colors, and textures.
3. What did they notice? What did they miss? Discuss with the projector off.
4. Next, turn the projector on and look closely at the painting. Have your students decipher as much as they can about the work visually and about the possible meaning behind the painting based on their observations.

Activity: Observing the Seasons

Aim: To discover and record the effects of the seasons on the colors in our surroundings

Materials: camera, board, paint, paintbrushes

Procedure:

1. Many of the Impressionists were interested in the changes in color and light quality associated with the changes of the seasons. At the beginning of the school year, discuss the four seasons. What colors do you associate with each season? Why?
2. Ask students to make a palette for each of the seasons, with at least four colors for each.
3. Have them go outside and take a picture of something in the sun. (It can be anything—a tree, a sign, a building.)
4. Once a month throughout the school year, have students photograph the same thing at the same time of day.
5. At the end of the school year, ask students to put the photos in order and hang them with the palettes that were created for the appropriate season.
6. As a class, compare and contrast the changes in the quality of light, colors, values, atmosphere, and mood in the photographs.
7. Are the photographs consistent with the palettes previously created?

Activity: Painting in a Loose Style

Aim: To gain experience with different painting materials and techniques

Materials: illustration board or poster board; flat, wide paintbrushes; narrow paintbrushes; black and white acrylic paint (younger students can use tempera paint; for older students, oil paint can also be used); pears and apples

Procedure:

1. Set up a still life using pears and apples and a solid-colored fabric. Set up extra lighting to create dramatic shadows.
2. Have students use the wide brushes to paint a black-and-white picture of the still life. Encourage them to focus on capturing the light and dark values they see rather than representing the exact edges of the fruit.
3. Have students use the narrower brushes to create another painting of the still life, again focusing on capturing the light and dark values.
4. As a class, discuss the difference between the two paintings and the effects of the paintbrush size.

Activity: Writing a Journal Entry

Aim: To articulate observations about a painting in order to gain an understanding of what the artist might have experienced at the site depicted

Materials: paper and pencils or pens

Procedure:

1. Instruct students to choose a painting in the exhibition that depicts a particular location.
2. Ask students to look closely at the painting.
3. Ask them to imagine they are tourists visiting the site. Encourage them to think about the effects of the sun, atmosphere, and weather.
4. Have them write a journal entry describing their experiences based on what they see in the painting.

Activity: Capturing the Effects of Light

Aim: To portray the effects of natural light in a drawing or painting

Materials: paper, pastels or paints, paintbrushes

Procedure:

1. With your students, look carefully at the landscape paintings in this resource. Discuss how each artist depicts the effects of light on the landscape. Make sure to talk about the use of color in shadowed and highlighted areas of the paintings.
2. Go outdoors with your class on a sunny day, and have students choose a subject for their outdoor scene. They may choose a park scene, a view of buildings, or any other scene where they can illustrate the effects of sunlight.
3. Ask students to create a drawing or painting that focuses on capturing the effects of the sun on their scene. Have students think about the colors they can use to portray the light on buildings, trees, or whatever else they are drawing or painting.
4. Remind students to be less preoccupied with depicting detail than capturing an overall effect.
5. In class, discuss the challenges students faced when working on their drawings or paintings.

Activity: Painting in the Plein-Air Style

Aim: To experience painting outdoors from direct observation

Materials: pencil, watercolors, watercolor paper, easels, paintbrushes

Procedure:

1. Go outdoors with your class to a local park, pond, or forest, and have students sit quietly in a location of their choosing.
2. Instruct students to jot down notes about their surroundings and their reactions to them.
3. Ask students to paint an aspect of their surroundings, taking care to capture the mood. Students should feel free to combine elements from different perspectives of the landscape into a single picture.

Activity: Experimenting with Style

Aim: To understand one or more stylistic approaches to painting, specifically the approaches of the artists discussed in this resource

Materials: paper, paint, paintbrushes

Procedure:

1. Ask students to choose a subject they would like to paint—a landscape, portrait, or any other subject that appeals to them.
2. Ask them to select an artist whose approach to painting they will emulate. Emphasize that the aim is to gain an understanding of the artist's stylistic approach rather than to produce a copy of their work.
3. Have students think about whether they want to render what they see in a realistic manner, as in the style of Corot and Millet; reorder the elements of their subject, as in the style of Cézanne; or capture the essence of a fleeting moment in everyday life, as in the style of Morisot and Monet.
4. Have them consider how they will use color, pattern, and form to create their desired style.
5. Have students make their painting, using the subject and approach they have selected. Instruct studio art students to paint the same scene twice, using two different approaches. For the first painting, ask them to aim for a realistic depiction. For the second painting, have them try to create an evocative image. Remind them that color, form, and pattern can be expressive rather than descriptive.

Below are some subjects that educators can use to approach the works of art discussed in this resource.

IMPRESSIONISM

Edouard Manet, *Argenteuil–Boats;* Claude Monet, *Charing Cross Bridge;* Berthe Morisot, *At Bougival;* and Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *La Parisienne*

REALISM

Camille Corot, *Distant View of Corbeil;* Honoré Daumier, *The Night Walkers;* and Jean-François Millet, *The Goose Girl at Gruchy*

POST-IMPRESSIONISM

Pierre Bonnard, *Sunlight at Vernon;* Paul Cézanne, *The François Zola Dam;* Paul Signac, *St. Tropez;* and Vincent van Gogh, *Rain–Auvers*

CULTURAL STUDIES

Pierre Bonnard, *Sunlight at Vernon;* and Jean-François Millet, *The Goose Girl at Gruchy*

Normandy and Its Cuisine

A major apple-producing region, Normandy also produces apple cider and calvados, a distilled cider or apple brandy. Normandy's cuisine is based on cream and butter and makes great use of apples (more than one hundred varieties are grown). Try making the following recipe as part of a lesson on Normandy:

Normandy Apple and Cream Tart *(Tarte Normande à la crème)*

- 10 1/2 inch unbaked pastry shell
- 4 large Granny Smith or other tart apples (peeled, cored, and cut into 1-inch chunks)
- 2 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 2/3 cup of sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 2/3 cup crème fraîche or heavy cream
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Toss apples with the melted butter.
3. Beat together sugar and eggs until creamy and pale yellow. Add cream and vanilla extract and beat until well blended.

4. Spread apples evenly over bottom of tart shell. Cover with cream mixture to just below rim. Sprinkle with remaining sugar.
5. Bake tart in a removable ring pan on a baking sheet for 35–45 minutes. Apples should be browned and batter set. Cool on a wire rack. Serve warm.

Show the film *Madame Bovary* (1949; based on the novel by Gustave Flaubert and directed by Vincente Minnelli) to give students a visual experience of Normandy, its landscape, and provincial life. (Ages 13 and up)

Provence

Paul Cézanne, *The François Zola Dam;* Paul Signac, *St. Tropez;* and Vincent van Gogh, *Rain–Auvers*

Give students a glimpse of provincial life in Provence by viewing *Jean de Florette* (1986) and *Manon des Sources* (1986), films by Claude Berri based on novels by Marcel Pagnol. (Ages 13 and up)

Paris

Honoré Daumier, *The Night Walkers,* and Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *La Parisienne*

Bring nineteenth-century Paris to life with the following films (ages 13 and up):

> *Gervaise* (1956). Based on the novel *L'Assommoir* (1867) by Emile Zola. Directed by René Clément, 116 min.
>
> *Nana* (1926). Based on the novel *Nana* (1880) by Emile Zola. Directed by Jean Renoir, 135 min.

LITERATURE

Vincent van Gogh, *Rain–Auvers;* Honoré Daumier, *The Night Walkers;* and Edouard Manet, *Argenteuil–Boats*

The poetry and other writings of Charles Baudelaire (1821–1867). Baudelaire urged artists to find poetry in contemporary everyday scenes, to capture what he called "the heroism of modern life." His 1863 essay "The Painter of Modern Life"—in which he states that to be relevant, art must concern itself with modernity—was a strong influence on the Impressionists.

The poetry of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–1882). Longfellow was one of van Gogh's favorite poets. One poem specifically inspirational to van Gogh was "The Rainy Day."

Don Quixote (1605) by Cervantes. This novel was a strong influence on Daumier.

IMPRESSIONIST MUSIC

While Impressionist artists were pushing the boundaries of art, musicians were making similar advances in music. Prominent Impressionist composers include Claude Debussy, Paul Dukas, and Maurice Ravel. Impressionist music focuses on suggestion and atmosphere rather than strong emotion or the depiction of a story. It developed as a reaction to the emphasis on form and structure of such composers as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Ludwig van Beethoven and to the emotional richness of Romantic composers such as Robert Schumann and Franz Schubert, whose music was characterized by dramatic use of the major and minor scale system. Impressionist music tends to make use of dissonance and uncommon scales, in particular whole-tone scales (notes are a whole step apart, rather than traditional diatonic patterns, which combine whole steps and half steps). Romantic composers also used long forms of music such as the symphony and concerto, while Impressionist composers favored short forms such as the nocturne, arabesque, and prelude. Debussy and other Impressionist composers, like Impressionist painters, were strongly influenced by the writing of Charles Baudelaire.

For more information on these composers, visit the following links, which provide biographical information, song files, pictures, and videos.

Debussy: http://www.last.fm/music/Claude+Debussy
Dukas: http://www.last.fm/music/Paul+Dukas
Ravel: http://www.last.fm/music/Maurice+Ravel

If you are interested in bringing music into the classroom, you can download songs from the following albums, each of which focuses on a single artist:

Art & Music: Cézanne—Music of His Time
http://www.naxos.com/catalogue/item.asp?item_code=8.558179

Art & Music: Manet—Music of His Time
http://www.naxos.com/catalogue/item.asp?item_code=8.558117

Art & Music: Monet—Music of His Time
http://www.naxos.com/catalogue/item.asp?item_code=8.558058

Art & Music: Renoir—Music of His Time
http://www.naxos.com/catalogue/item.asp?item_code=8.558176

Art & Music: Turner—Music of His Time
http://www.naxos.com/catalogue/item.asp?item_code=8.558116

JAPANESE ART

Woodblock prints first appeared in France on the wrappings used to protect imported ceramics, and they became hugely popular from the middle of the century on. Beginning in the 1860s, *ukiyo-e*, Japanese woodblock prints, became a source of inspiration for many European Impressionist painters in France. Many artists working in nineteenth-century France—including Bonnard, Cassatt, Degas, Manet, Monet, and van Gogh—were influenced by the strong graphic qualities of Japanese art. The prints showed familiar scenes of daily life, but painters of the avant-garde were particularly struck by their formal characteristics: bold areas of flat color, dramatic cropping, unusual perspectives, and the juxtaposition of areas of pattern that flattened the picture plane. One of the most prominent of these artists was Hiroshige (1797–1858). The influence of Japanese prints was central to the evolution of Impressionism. For more information, visit: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/jpon/hd_jpon.htm

Hiroshige (1797–1858), *Plum Estate, Kameido,* 1857. Woodblock print. From "One Hundred Famous Views of Edo." The Brooklyn Museum

Selected Works of Art

This section provides background information on thirteen selected images from *Turner to Cézanne: Masterpieces from the Davies Collection, National Museum Wales*. Each commentary is accompanied by a set of discussion questions. You may wish to begin with open-ended questions such as the following: What do you see? What colors do you see? What is happening in the scene? As in any discussion, students' opinions may differ; ask them to explain their answers and back them up with direct observations. Comparing answers and noting differences in perspective can be a fruitful avenue for discussion.

Activities that relate to the artwork discussed are also provided. The activities are designed to utilize a range of student skills. Some are language-based; others are art-based. The activities can be adapted for use with students of any age.

Discussion Questions

1. What is unusual about the way Bonnard has structured this composition? (Note the cropped objects and the placement of the objects within the picture plane.)
2. Why do you think Bonnard depicts only a portion of the house?
3. How do these qualities affect our perception of the scene?
4. Do you see a figure? Describe the figure and the placement of the figure within the painting.
5. What is the focus of Bonnard's painting?
6. What time of day do you think is depicted? Why?
7. Has Bonnard created a sense of depth in this painting?

1. Pierre Bonnard (1867–1947)

***Sunlight at Vernon*, 1920**
Oil on canvas
18½ x 24½ in.
National Museum of Wales; Miss Margaret S. Davies Bequest, 1963 (NMWA 2164)
© ADAGP, Paris, and DACS, London, 2008

One of the leading figures associated with Post-Impressionism, Pierre Bonnard was interested in the effects of color and light in the context of intimate domestic and landscape settings. *Sunlight at Vernon* represents the house that Bonnard had been renting at Vernonnet—a village across the Seine River from the small town of Vernon in Normandy, north of Paris—since 1910, and which he purchased in 1912. It was near Monet's home at Giverny, and the two men became close friends. The small, half-timbered structure, which Bonnard called Ma Roulotte (My Trailer), was a recurring motif in the artist's work between 1910 and 1928.

Inspired by Monet's repetitive approach to subject matter, Bonnard attempted to interpret Ma Roulotte under differing atmospheric conditions. He painted both the interior and exterior, sometimes together, as cool rooms leading through to bright gardens and vice versa. This relationship became a main preoccupation in his work; yet unlike Monet, Bonnard did not paint en plein air, preferring instead to work from memory. He described his painting process as follows: "I have all my subjects to hand. I go and look at them. I take notes. Then I go home. And before I start painting I reflect, I dream."[1] The expressive, psychological dimension of this working practice could not differ more from the immediacy of his Impressionist predecessors, and this placed Bonnard firmly within the broader environs of **Symbolism**. Bonnard moved around France fairly regularly after 1911, so these works were painted working from pencil notations and studies. This painting shows the artist's garden in a wild state, as he preferred it. The pink-tinged sky suggests the early evening light as it bounces off the timber, heightening the surrounding greenery.

The timbered terrace in Bonnard's Vernonnet views becomes almost as familiar as the figure who inhabits them—the painter's muse, model, and future wife, Marthe, whom he had met in 1893 but did not marry until 1925. The small figure visible at the bottom right of the canvas, disappearing into the wild garden, likely depicts Marthe. Marthe is best known as the nude

1. Quoted in Sarah Whitfield, "Fragments of an Identical World," in Sarah Whitfield, ed., *Bonnard,* exhib. cat. (London: Tate Publishing, 1998), p. 9.

figure washing and bathing herself in numerous paintings and drawings by Bonnard. Although these and many other images of her suggest she enjoyed a life of leisure, in fact, she managed the household at Ma Roulotte, as well as Le Bosquet, Bonnard's second home at Le Cannet near Cannes in the south of France. In Bonnard's paintings of these two houses, as in *Sunlight at Vernon,* Marthe is often the quietly presiding figure, hovering at the edge of a room, in the garden, passing across a doorway, or glimpsed with a cat or dachshund in her lap, in a chair beyond the main motif of a painting. At other times, she is a vivid and tangible presence.

Activity: Depicting Your Home

Aim: To use familiar subject matter to experiment with perspective, cropping and painting techniques

Materials: internet access, paper, pencil, canvas, acrylic paint, paint-brushes, camera

Procedure:

1. Ask students to choose an aspect of their home—a view of their house, apartment, or yard—to depict in a painting. Encourage them to think about a perspective that will convey an accurate sense of the space and the feeling of being there.
2. Have students take photographs from different perspectives with different cropping and choose one image to work from.
3. Ask students to make a pencil sketch of their scene.
4. Show the students a variety of works by Bonnard, Claude Monet, Berthe Morisot, and other Impressionist artists.
5. Discuss how the artists applied the paint to their canvases (using short, visible brushstrokes and mottled color to convey the effects of light). The Impressionists wanted the colors to be "mixed" in the eye of the viewer and on the canvas rather than on their palette. Demonstrate these techniques for the class.
6. Ask students to use these techniques to complete their paintings, paying particular attention to color and brushstrokes and trying to convey the mood of their scene.

2. Paul Cézanne (1839–1906)

***The François Zola Dam*, ca. 1877–78**
Oil on canvas
21 3/8 x 29 1/4 in.
National Museum of Wales; Miss Gwendoline E. Davies, 1951
(NMWA 2439)

Paul Cézanne was born in Aix-en-Provence, a small town in Provence, where one of his friends and schoolmates was the future novelist and critic Emile Zola. In addition to studying painting in Paris, Cézanne studied to be a lawyer and worked as a banker at his father's bank. In the early 1870s, under the influence of the Impressionists and his mentor Camille Pissarro, Cézanne began working from direct observation within the landscape. In 1886, he inherited and moved into the family home in Provence, where his more architectural Post-Impressionist style developed. Cézanne sought to fuse the lessons of the old masters with the contemporary Impressionist preoccupation with direct observation from nature, and his work was vital to the development of twentieth-century modernism.

The precise location depicted in this painting has been the subject of considerable debate, and the title has been altered on numerous occasions. Although it has long been known as *Midday, L'Estaque*, recent scholarship suggests that the painting's original purchase title, *Le Barrage François Zola* (The François Zola Dam) is indeed correct.[1] If so, this is Cézanne's only known view of the dam, which was built by Emile Zola's father and lies about three miles outside Aix-en-Provence. A location that matches the painting exactly is unlikely to be found since Cézanne has manipulated the landscape for aesthetic purposes. The central *S*-shaped configuration begins with the row of cypress trees in the foreground and winds up through the dam to the blue peak of the Mont Saint Victoire in the distance. A vertical anchor is provided to the left by the tree, the boxlike form, and the geometric gray area (the dam itself) directly above it. The red-roofed house is probably an invention, designed to echo the blue mountain behind. This is a particularly fine example of Cézanne's approach to organizing and articulating the landscape on a flat canvas.

Cézanne has painted this on a fine linen canvas covered with a smooth cream ground that gives the surface its uniform appearance. The paint

Discussion Questions

1. How do you think it would feel to be in this landscape? Would it be hot or cold? Moist or dry? Would the sun feel gentle or intense? Why do you think that?
2. What details of this scene has Cézanne omitted? Why do you think he may have done this, and how does it affect the image?
3. Does this painting remind you of any landscapes you have visited? Explain.
4. What shapes do you see in this painting? Can you see any buildings? How are the shapes of the landscape different from or similar to the shapes representing buildings or constructions?
5. Describe Cézanne's use of color.
6. How has Cézanne created a sense of depth in this painting?
7. Describe the brushstrokes in this painting. How are they different from those in Impressionist paintings like Manet's *Argenteuil–Boats* (no. 5), Morisot's *At Bougival* (no. 8), or Monet's *Charing Cross Bridge* (no. 7)?

1. See, for example, Joseph J. Rishel, *Cézanne*, exhib. cat. (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1996), p. 190; Ann Robbins, *Cézanne in Britain* (London: National Gallery, 2006), p. 78; and Ann Sumner, *Colour and Light: Fifty Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Works at the National Museum of Wales* (Cardiff: National Museum of Wales, 2005), p. 47.

is relatively thickly applied, and the technique is a mixture of Cézanne's characteristic striated brushwork and thicker strokes of saturated color. The painting was first owned by Gauguin, who acquired it in 1883 and described it as "quite simply a marvel."[2] He used the composition in a design for a fan, now in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, and the more general influence of Cézanne's work can be seen in Gauguin's work from this period.

2. Rishel, *Cézanne*, p. 189. See also Merete Bodelsen, "Gauguin's Cézannes," *Burlington Magazine* (May 1962): 204–11.

Activity: Understanding a Painting's Compositional Structure

Aim: To develop an understanding of Cézanne's method of constructing form

Materials: large sheet of white drawing paper, smaller sheets of paper, pencils, digital projector

Procedure:

1. Project the image of Cézanne's painting onto the large sheet of white drawing paper.
2. Ask your students to describe the painting's formal structure—the shapes, lines, and colors that make up the picture.
3. Ask students to imagine reducing the elements to geometric shapes. What would those shapes look like? Ask your students to describe any shapes that represent shadows or reflections.
4. After your discussion, invite students to draw directly on top of the projected slide, following the most prominent lines in the painting.
5. After each student has worked on the drawing of the slide, shut the projector off and view the drawing in progress.
6. Discuss how the black-and-white collaborative drawing might reveal the painting's structure.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you see different textures in Corot's painting? How might he have achieved these textures with his brush?
2. How has the artist used color? Would you describe his palette as limited? Why? How does his use of color affect the image?
3. Has Corot included any figures in this painting? Why do you think he excluded them from this scene?
4. Do you see any signs of people in this landscape? Where?
5. Discuss the painting as a series of ratios. What is the ratio of sky to water to land? Of natural to human elements? What do these ratios tell you about the subject of this painting? What is Corot most interested in? What is the focus of the painting?
6. Can you see the artist's brushstrokes? Describe them.
7. Notice the edges of the forms depicted. Are they consistent, or are some sharp and others soft? Why do you think he rendered the scene in this way?

Activity: Comparing Two Landscape Paintings

Aim: To understand the stylistic differences between two paintings of the same of genre

Materials: paper and pencil

Procedure:

1. Show students Corot's *Distant View of Corbeil* and Monet's *Charing Cross Bridge* (no. 7).
2. Have your students create a list of words that come to mind when looking at each painting. These words may include objects, colors and emotions or descriptions of the artists' handling of form or perspective.
3. Ask students to share the words on each of their lists with the rest of the class. Are any of the words on both lists?
4. Discuss why particular words came to mind.

3. Camille Corot (1796–1875)

***Distant View of Corbeil*, ca. 1870**
Oil on canvas
9 7/8 x 13 3/8 in.
National Museum of Wales; Miss Margaret S. Davies, 1963
(NMWA 2441)

During Camille Corot's time, landscape painting was very popular. It was generally divided into two groups: historical landscapes by Neoclassicists, representing idealized views of real and imaginary sites inhabited by mythological and biblical figures; and realistic landscapes that were largely faithful to actual landscapes, architecture, and flora and often featured figures of peasants. At the time, landscape artists typically began by sketching and painting studies outdoors, which they later finished indoors. The work of Englishmen John Constable and Joseph Mallord William Turner, who reinforced the trend in favor of Realism, was highly influential upon French landscape artists in the early nineteenth century.

For a short period—from 1821 to 1822—Corot studied with Achille-Etna Michallon, a landscape painter of Corot's age who was a protégé of the painter Jacques-Louis David and a well-respected teacher. Michallon had a great influence on Corot's career. Although Corot is also known as a portraitist, as a landscapist he heavily influenced the work of the Impressionists, including Degas, Morisot, Pissarro, and Sisley. Morisot's parents were friendly with Corot, and he played a crucial role in her early development. Degas's private collection included seven of the artist's works.

Although *Distant View of Corbeil* represents a named place, the dating of this work suggests it was not painted en plein air but was more likely completed from a combination of studies and memory. During the late 1860s, Corot's ill health meant that the artist was largely restricted to studio painting, a confinement that was exacerbated by the Franco-Prussian War and the siege of Paris from 1870 to 1871.[1] The town of Corbeil lies on the Seine River, between Paris and Barbizon, and was well known as a manufacturing town with extensive flourmills and a corn warehouse.

Although Corot's subject matter and basic style remained constant, the composition of this late scene is far less pronounced than in his earlier works. The Seine curves through the center of the work, leading the eye

1. Lorenz Eitner, *19th-Century European Painting: David to Cézanne* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2002), p. 222.

through the middle and background, and the formal structure and placement of the trees are not as rigid as those in some earlier works. Corot has also omitted the human figures he often previously depicted, leaving an empty and Impressionistic foreground section. With no figures in the composition to provide either narrative interest or a break from the nearly monochromatic palette, Corot adds variety and vigor through the addition of a vibrant pink blossom across the foreground right of the picture. Overall, the handling is softer and less glassy than that of the earlier work and demonstrates Corot's extraordinary painterly skill. Here, Corot's feathery brushwork and harmonized palette result in an image that is at once naturalistic and idyllic.

Discussion Questions

1. What time of day is depicted? How does Daumier convey this?
2. Describe the background in the painting. Do you see any areas where the white ground shows through? Why do you think he created this type of background?
3. What details are not included in this scene? Why do you think they were omitted, and how does this affect the image?
4. Daumier often "drew" with his paintbrush, creating lines with the tip of his brush. Do you see any areas that look like a drawing?
5. Describe Daumier's use of color.

Activity: Doing the Groundwork

Aim: To experiment with underpainting

Materials: watercolor paper or canvas, acrylic paint, brushes of various sizes

Procedure:

1. For this painting, Daumier started with a white ground. In some areas you can see the white shining through the brown paint. In *The François Zola Dam* (no. 2), Cézanne used a smooth cream ground to unify the painting. Millet painted *The Goose Girl at Gruchy* (no. 6) on a light ocher ground. The old masters often covered the painting surface with a thin, even layer of red before beginning a painting, thereby warming the green and blue tones painted on top and creating an increased sense of depth. Have students cover the surface of their paper or canvas with a layer of watered-down red paint. Allow that to dry.
2. Ask them to paint a simple still life, such as a piece of fruit.
3. Have students make a second painting, and let them to choose a different color for the under painting.
4. Ask students to compare and discuss the results.

4. Honoré Daumier (1808–1879)

***The Night Walkers*, 1842–47**
Oil on board
11 3/8 x 7 3/8 in.
National Museum of Wales; Miss Gwendoline E. Davies Bequest, 1951 (NMWA 2452)

Honoré Daumier's fame rests primarily on his graphic work as a caricaturist. In the mid-1840s, however, he began to work in oil. *The Night Walkers* is thought to be one of Daumier's earliest works in oil, and the definition of detail through line rather than tone and color hints at his reliance on his skill as a draftsman. This somewhat enigmatic nocturnal scene shows a top-hatted gentleman and companion regarding the moon along the banks of the Seine. The dress of the two figures suggests differing social positions, but Daumier gives no other clues to a narrative. It has been suggested that there is something of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza about the figures[1]—the hero of the Cervantes's novel was a favorite subject of Daumier's. Moonlit scenes pervaded European romanticism at the time[2] and are a subject Daumier had explored in earlier lithographs.

The Night Walkers was painted on a thin oak panel with a white ground, with the figures outlined in black crayon and paint. Infrared photography has shown that this work originally featured a single figure in the center of the canvas. The head was placed next to the head of the left-hand walker, and the form is still just visible. The reason for the change of composition is not known, but the contrast between the dark figures in the lower right of the image and the bright moon in the upper left creates a balance that demonstrates Daumier's compositional skill.

1. John Ingamells, *The Davies Collection of French Art* (Cardiff: National Museum of Wales, 1967), p. 45.
2. See, for example, Paul Spencer-Longhurst, *Moonrise over Europe: J. C. Dahl and Romantic Landscape*, exhib. cat. (Birmingham, England: Barber Institute of Fine Arts; London: Philip Wilson, 2006).

5. Edouard Manet (1832–1883)

***Argenteuil–Boats*, 1874**
Oil on canvas
23 x 31½ in.
National Museum of Wales; Miss Margaret S. Davies Bequest, 1963
(NMWA 2467)

Edouard Manet studied under Thomas Couture, a successful Salon painter, but he was most influenced by the old master paintings he saw at the Louvre, particularly those of the Spanish painter Diego Velázquez, whose vivid brushwork he admired. He began to develop a manner of painting quite different from the academic tradition; his bold style and modern subjects were influential to younger artists later called Impressionists. Although Manet painted some Impressionist pictures in the 1870s, he never exhibited with the group and did not share its interest in spontaneity. He worked mostly in the studio with models and from drawings.

During the summer of 1874, Manet stayed at the family home in Gennevilliers, two miles from the town of Argenteuil, where he painted some of his most famous images. Famed for its boating and regattas, Argenteuil was popular with well-heeled Parisians wishing to escape the city and was a rapidly expanding location for weekend tourism. As a painter of modern life and pursuits, Manet duly followed. He had assisted Monet in finding a house in Argenteuil, and that summer, Manet, Monet, and sometimes Renoir would paint together on the banks of the Seine, producing superficially similar yet utterly different representations of the location.

This painting shows the Seine River at Argenteuil. While many of Monet's and Renoir's Argenteuil views show the town as a place of "modern" pleasures, Manet's work creates a subtle juxtaposition of leisure and labor. On the far bank are laundry houses that catered to the influx of visitors. Thick smoke suggesting industrial pollution billows from almost invisible chimneys in the distance. While this painting has the looseness of Impressionism and plein-air painting, it has the structure of Manet's tightly knit compositions from the 1860s, seen, for example, in the way in which the boats recede with complete uniformity, the masts lined up in perfect parallel, creating a visually arresting (but very unlikely) set of reflections in the water.

In some of Manet's paintings from this period, his brushwork and palette can be compared to that of Monet, but this work is closer stylistically to Manet's work of the previous decade, with its opaque blocks of color, eschewal of transitional tones, and emphasis on creams and brown-blacks.

Discussion Questions

1. What mood is conveyed in this painting? How does Manet achieve this?
2. This scene depicts boating, which was a popular leisure activity for Parisian tourists. Why do you think Manet included the laundry houses along with the boats in this painting?
3. Manet depicts the recreational activities of those around him. What leisure activities are prevalent today? What activities do you engage in?
4. The Impressionists depicted scenes from everyday life. What signs of modern life do you see?
5. What do you think is the focus of this painting? What do you think Manet wanted to communicate?

Activity: Understanding Composition

Aim: To identify the compositional elements of a painting and understand how they affect a work of art

Materials: paper and pencil

Procedure:

1. Ask students to fold a sheet of paper into four sections.
2. Ask them to find ten lines and four shapes that they think are the most important in the compositional structure of the painting and then draw them in the first box.
3. In the second box, have them reduce the number of lines to six and the shapes to three. In the third box, ask them to draw four of the lines and two of the shapes, and in the last box, to reduce the drawing to two lines and one shape.
4. Display all the drawings. (You may want to place them on the floor and have students walk around them.) Discuss similarities and differences.
5. Which seem to be the most important shapes and/or lines in the painting?

6. Jean-François Millet (1814–1875)

***The Goose Girl at Gruchy*, 1854–56**
Oil on canvas
12 7/8 x 9 3/4 in.
National Museum of Wales; Miss Gwendoline E. Davies Bequest, 1951 (NMWA 2479)

This small painting is set in the hamlet of Gruchy near Cherbourg (in Normandy), where Jean-François Millet was born. During the summer of 1854, Millet returned home for the first time in almost ten years,[1] and this work was most likely begun there, though it was probably finished back at his home in Barbizon, an area outside of Paris near Fontainebleau Forest. The screaming geese to the right of the picture contrast with the contemplativeness of the goose girl herself, who leans on a stick and appears oblivious to the chattering and splashing. Behind the girl, Gruchy sits atop a sharply rising hill. Millet frequently depicted goose girls and wrote of a later version of the subject, "I am at work on my Geese … I want to make the screams of my Geese ring through the air. Ah! Life, life! The life of the whole!"[2] Beginning in the 1840s, Millet often depicted peasants leaning on garden implements, and while in later works this was an illustration of exhaustion and backbreaking labor, here it is a gesture of a bucolic reverie. Recalling events witnessed in his youth, Millet frequently recorded the hardships of peasant life, but earlier works such as this one are often nostalgic.

Millet painted the work on a light ocher ground. Although the colors are more saturated than in many of his previous works, there is a curious soft-focus edge to *The Goose Girl at Gruchy* that is unique among Millet's work and which evokes an odd sense of nostalgia and idealization, though this has also been described as a damp mistiness.[3]

Discussion Questions

1. Describe the mood conveyed in this painting. How has Millet achieved this?
2. Describe the girl's clothing, expression, and posture. What do these things tell you about her? Describe the attitude of this girl as conveyed through the painting.
3. What do you think her life is like? Describe it.
4. Why do you think Millet painted this girl?
5. Think about the kind of portrait a wealthy person might be likely to commission. How is *The Goose Girl at Gruchy* different or similar?
6. Notice the way Millet has treated the edges of the forms. Describe their appearance.

Activity: Building a Narrative

Aim: To construct a narrative based on Millet's painting

Materials: paper and pencil or pen

Procedure:

1. Ask students what they think is going on in Millet's painting.
2. Ask them to think about the way the girl is dressed, her posture, the time of day, and the surrounding landscape.
3. Have students imagine a scene that they think would happen just before or after the scene depicted by Millet. Ask them to write a paragraph describing this scenario.

1. Robert Herbert et al., *Jean-François Millet*, exhib. cat. (London: Hayward Gallery, 1976), p. 104.
2. Letter from Millet to Alfred Sensier, 27 January 1867, quoted in Arthur Tomson, "Art Collecting as an Investment," *The Art Journal*, no. 853 (July 1909): 208.
3. Timothy Stevens, "Bergère Assise: The Davies Sisters and French Painting in Cardiff," *National Collections Fund Review* (1992), p. 82.

Discussion Questions

1. Describe the scene Monet painted. What is the focus of his work? How does he depict each landscape element?
2. What time of day do you think he has captured? Why do you think that?
3. Describe how he captures the effects of sunlight and fog in his painting. What colors does he use? Are any of the colors unusual for a cityscape painting?
4. How would you describe the mood depicted in this painting?
5. Discuss Monet's interest in capturing the overall atmosphere of the scene rather than rendering each detail. Why might he do this? Discuss the manner in which he paints foreground and background elements.
6. How would Monet's scene look if the weather suddenly changed or if he were painting the same scene in the middle of the day? If it were summer?
7. What signs of modern life do you see?
8. Can you see any clear outlines? Are you able to see exactly where one form begins? If line does not define the forms in this painting, what does?
9. Monet was heavily influenced by Turner's painting style. Compare and contrast Monet's *Charing Cross Bridge* with Turner's *Storm* (no. 12).

Activity: Painting or Drawing in a Series

Aim: To see how paintings or drawings of the same subject by the same artist can differ

Materials: paper, paints, paintbrushes, drawing pencils

Procedure:

1. As a class, take art supplies to a convenient location. Ask students to choose a perspective and paint or sketch what they see.
2. Go to the same spot on another day at a different time. Ask students to repeat the same activity.

7. Claude Monet (1840–1926)

***Charing Cross Bridge*, 1902**
Oil on canvas
25 ¾ x 32 ⅛ in.
National Museum of Wales; Miss Margaret S. Davies Bequest, 1963
(NMWA 2483)

Born in Paris, Claude Monet moved with his family to Le Havre in Normandy when he was five. His father wanted him to go into the family grocery business, but he was determined to become an artist. He demonstrated an early talent for drawing and began selling charcoal caricatures. As a teenager, Monet accompanied Eugène Boudin on painting excursions to Normandy beaches—an experience that influenced Monet's mature work.

Monet first visited and depicted London in the autumn of 1870 during the Franco-Prussian War. Many years later, in 1899, he began work on his extensive and important series of London views, of which the present work is an example. Monet's debt to both Turner and Whistler in his London scenes has recently been fully explored,[1] and this series may have been inspired by Whistler's set of lithographs of the city from 1896, in which he depicts similar views. Monet arrived in late autumn and stayed at the Savoy Hotel, where his sixth-floor room afforded him a panoramic view of the river; it was from this room that his views of Charing Cross Bridge were executed. Monet painted the Thames in three series: Waterloo Bridge, the Houses of Parliament, and Charing Cross Railway Bridge and the view upstream toward the Houses of Parliament.

In his later paintings, Monet was primarily concerned with the articulation of light and atmospheric nuance. Charing Cross Bridge is featured in no fewer than thirty-five canvases, all of them morning scenes. Monet omitted Cleopatra's Needle (an obelisk on the Victoria Embankment) from all but two of his Charing Cross views,[2] as indeed it is absent in this one. The detail in this painting is reduced to the compositional devices of the bridge itself, the distant Houses of Parliament, the two boats, and the small section of the embankment, all of which act as visual anchors around which the interchangeable haze of water and sky fluctuate. In addition to the effects of fog, Monet has depicted, to the left of the canvas, the smoke coming from a train on the railway bridge, which dissipates into the general mist. While some artists might consider the London fog a hindrance, for

1. See Katherine Lochnan, ed., *Turner Whistler Monet*, exhib. cat. (London: Tate Publishing in association with the Art Gallery of Ontario, 2004), pp. 179–83.
2. John House, *Monet: Nature into Art* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1986), p. 61.

Monet it was an intrinsic part of the landscape. "Without the fog," he said, "London wouldn't be a beautiful city. It's the fog that gives it its magnificent breadth."[3]

In *Charing Cross Bridge*, the influence of Turner is readily apparent. As the French artist studied the interaction of color and light in the work of the British painter, his own brushwork became increasingly fractured and his palette more tonal. In *Charing Cross Bridge*, for example, the palpable sense of light striving to break through rain and fog resembles the play of sunlight, water, and clouds in Turner's *Storm* (no. 12).

3. Letter to René Gimpel, quoted in Grace Seiberling, *Monet in London*, exhib. cat. (Atlanta: High Museum of Art, 1988), p. 55.

3. Repeat this activity as many times as possible without using earlier paintings in the series as reference.
4. Have each student display his or her series of paintings/drawings and discuss how each work in the series is similar and/or different.

Activity: Using Color to Convey the Time of Day

Aim: To analyze the changes in the quality of light at different times of the day

Materials: camera, paper, pencil, watercolor paper, watercolors, paintbrushes

Procedure:

1. Ask students to take photographs of a nearby landscape—the beach, the mountains, a park, or even their backyard.
2. Ask students to choose a photograph that lends itself to being broken down into lines and large shapes. Discuss the idea of composition and the way these shapes break up the picture plane.
3. Have the students sketch only the general shapes of the scene onto watercolor paper. The drawing should not be a rendered reproduction of all the details in the photograph but rather a simple outline of the forms in the landscape.
4. Have students copy this drawing onto a second piece of paper.
5. In *Charing Cross Bridge*, Monet uses blues, purples, greens, and yellows to communicate the foggy morning. Discuss with students the use of colors to convey the time of day.
6. Have students use watercolors to paint their scenes, depicting a different time of day in each one.
7. Ask students to share their paintings with the class, describing their pictures and explaining why they chose their particular landscape and colors. Have them guess what general time of day is depicted in each painting and explain their reasoning.

8. Berthe Morisot (1841–1895)

***At Bougival*, 1882**
Oil on canvas
23 5/8 x 28 3/4 in.
National Museum of Wales; Miss Margaret S. Davies Bequest, 1963
(NMWA 2491)

The daughter of a high-ranking civil servant, Berthe Morisot was encouraged to draw because of its importance as a sign of social status. Morisot studied informally with Corot and also studied the old masters on display in the Louvre. She was a friend of Edouard Manet—who painted her on numerous occasions—and active member of the Impressionist circle. She was also one of the exhibiting artists at the first Impressionist exhibition of 1874. Although the pressures of bourgeois convention led her to marry—she married Manet's brother, Eugène, in 1874—this also enabled her to fully pursue her career as an artist. She was both highly skilled and prolific, working at the forefront of progressive technique. While it is debatable whether, as a woman, she was ever perceived as an equal by her peers, she showed work in every Impressionist exhibition except one. *At Bougival* appeared in the seventh exhibition, in 1882, and won considerable acclaim both from the establishment and within Impressionist circles.

In 1881, Morisot and her family rented a house at Bougival, ten miles west of Paris, and the house's gardens are featured frequently in her work. This image of the painter's daughter, Julie, giving a flower to her nanny, Paisie, was painted in the garden of a next-door neighbor. The handling is very free, and the variegated brushwork perfectly captures the sense of a wild garden and long grass, with the two figures framed and almost consumed by their surroundings. The blue, brown, and white tones of the figures are dispersed throughout the canvas (which receives only a scant covering in the outer parts), giving unity to the formal structure. Morisot painted numerous mother and child images. This reflects not only the subjects deemed "suitable" for a woman artist but also the painting of everyday life that was so central to Impressionism—which for a woman artist would have been very different from that of her male contemporaries. On the reverse of this canvas are the beginnings of a similar, hastily executed Impressionist landscape. A strikingly similar composition from a year later, in 1883, shows what appears to be the same location, only this time showing Julie with her father, Eugène Manet.

Discussion Questions

1. Describe the positioning of the figures. Are they posed as in a traditional frontal portrait? Do they appear to be aware of the artist, or are they interacting with one another?
2. Describe the surface/texture of the painting. Do you see any areas where the artist has applied the paint thickly? Are there thin areas?
3. Look at Morisot's brushstrokes. Describe them. Are they consistent throughout the painting, or are some areas painted differently than others? Why do you think Morisot painted in this manner? What do you think she wanted to express?
4. What details of this scene has Morisot omitted? Why do you think she may have done this, and how does it affect our perception of the image?
5. Describe the colors in this painting. Has the artist used different colors in the foreground than in the background? What effect does this create? How does Morisot's use of color unify the composition? Do you see colors repeated in multiple areas of the painting?
6. What is the focus of the painting?

Activity: Portrait Photography

Aim: To use photography to convey different styles of portraiture

Materials: camera with zoom lens (digital or black-and-white or color film)

Procedure:

1. Ask students to choose a friend, classmate, or family member as a subject and to ask that individual for permission to take candid photographs of him or her over the course of the following week.
2. Ask students to try to capture their subjects when they are unaware of being photographed. The students can hide from their subjects, use their zoom lens, or employ any other method they can think of.
3. Have students try to catch their subjects doing a variety of everyday activities over the course of the week.
4. Next, ask the students to take a more traditional posed frontal portrait of their subjects. (Here their subjects will have to be aware that their photographs are being taken.)
5. Have the students display their photographs and discuss the different poses and the attitudes caught in the candid photographs. Discuss the differences and similarities between the candid portraits and the posed portraits.

Discussion Questions

1. Describe the woman depicted in Renoir's painting. What can you tell about her from the information the artist has given us in the painting?
2. What details has Renoir omitted? Why do you think he may have done this, and how does it affect our understanding of who the woman is?
3. Describe the style in which Renoir has painted the dress. Compare it to the way he has depicted her face. How are they different?
4. The woman in this painting looks directly at the viewer. Why do you think Renoir portrayed her in this way? What do you think he wanted to communicate?

9. Pierre-August Renoir (1841–1919)

La Parisienne, 1874
Oil on canvas
64 3/8 x 42 5/8 in.
National Museum of Wales; Miss Gwendoline E. Davies Bequest, 1951 (NMWA 2495)

Born in the porcelain center of Limoges, Renoir moved with his family to Paris in 1844. At the age of fifteen, he apprenticed with a porcelain painter and studied drawing at night. By 1860, he had decided to become an artist and began studying the art at the Louvre, particularly the work of François Boucher, Eugène Delacroix, Jean-Honoré Fragonard, and Peter Paul Rubens.

Perhaps the best-known Impressionist work in the collection of the Davies sisters, *La Parisienne* exemplifies the ideals of Impressionism and the painting of modern life. The work was first exhibited under the title *La Parisienne*, though by 1892 it was known as *La Dame en Bleu* and is still popularly known as *The Blue Lady*. The model for this painting is the actress Henriette Henriot (1857–1944), who posed for Renoir on numerous occasions. However, the title suggests that Renoir was not painting a portrait but rather presenting her as a social type, specifically that of the modern, urban woman dressed in the latest fashion—a woman one might have seen at the theater, at dances, or in the shops and cafés of the French capital. This modern woman's eye-catching dress, fashioned with quick strokes of a brilliant cerulean blue highlighted with white, sets off her face as she confidently looks out from the canvas, directly at the viewer. With a plain, single-toned background against which the subject is suspended like a fashion plate, the painting recalls the portraits and single-figure compositions of Manet (who in turn recalls Velázquez) and also reflects the influence of Japanese prints.

With this early canvas, Renoir followed the poet Charles Baudelaire's mandate that contemporary artists be painters of modern life. X-ray photography has revealed that Renoir originally included a door to the left and a curtain on the upper right but subsequently painted them out. As a result, the figure appears to be gliding through an unspecified space, a device that increases *La Parisienne*'s charming sense of freshness and life. *La Parisienne* was first shown at the first Impressionist exhibition of 1874 at the photographer Nadar's studio, where it received mixed reviews.

Both under- and over painting show that Renoir's original concept for the work was somewhat different—the earring and upper eyelashes were added after the painting had been varnished, as were small areas of hair just below the subject's hat. Such details focus attention on the head and face of the model, in addition to making her more immediately glamorous. The rendering of the face is remarkably sharp next to the nebulous gray of the background and the blue costume.

Activity: Comparing Portraits of Women from Different Time Periods

Aim: To examine the diverse ways women are depicted in art and to interpret possible meanings

Materials: paper, pencil, photocopies of famous portraits of women such as *Mona Lisa* (1503–06) by Leonardo da Vinci; *Mater Dolorosa* (1590s) by El Greco; *Woman with the Hat* (1905) by Henri Matisse; *Madame X* (1884) by John Singer Sargent; and *Marilyn, 1967* (1967) by Andy Warhol

Procedure:

1. Give each student an image of Renoir's *La Parisienne* and a photocopy or printed image of another portrait of a woman.
2. Ask students to study each image carefully and make notes about it. Encourage them to think about the life of the subject, how the artist portrayed the woman in relationship to her position in society, the painting technique, and whether the portrait was commissioned or not.
3. Then ask students to place the images side by side and write down their comparisons.
4. Ask students to write a two-page essay about the similarities and differences between the works. Their papers should include a clear theme and carefully written descriptions.
5. Have students present their papers to the class. After all the papers have been presented, have a general discussion about the depiction of women in art and how it relates to the position of women in society during the respective time period.

Discussion Questions

1. Describe the palette used by Sickert in this painting. What mood is conveyed by these colors?
2. Which two colors do you think are the most prominent in this painting?
3. How has Sickert created a sense of depth and perspective among the buildings?
4. Can you tell from which direction the sun is shining? How?
5. Describe the style in which Sickert painted this image. Can you see any brushstrokes? How would you describe the way he has rendered the buildings?
6. While many artists portray Venice in a grand, ideally picturesque manner, in this painting, Sickert shows a true picture of a city in decline. What clues of this perspective on the city do you see? Why do you think Sickert chose to depict Venice in this way?

Activity: Conveying a Sense of Place

Aim: To develop techniques for expressing feeling and sentiment in realist painting

Materials: a photograph for reference, paint, paintbrushes, board or canvas

Procedure:

1. Ask students to choose a photograph from a vacation that has significance to them. (Students may prefer to make a photocopy of the picture to work from to make sure the original is not damaged.)
2. Have students make a painting of the scene that communicates those things that make it special. Encourage them to take liberties with the image to achieve this goal.
3. Ask students to share their paintings with the class and discuss the scenes they chose to depict. Allow them to respond to one another's paintings.

10. Walter Richard Sickert (1860–1942)

***Palazzo Eleanora Duse, Venice*, 1904**
Oil on canvas
21 3/4 x 18 1/8 in.
National Museum of Wales; Miss Margaret S. Davies Bequest, 1963 (NMWA 193)
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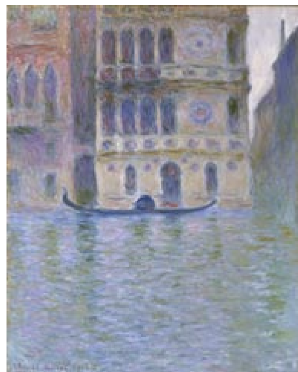
A major figure in modern British art in the early twentieth century, Sickert was for years described as a "British Impressionist," a label that does not do justice to his highly individual approach to painting. His work can more accurately be seen as an attempt to reconcile the articulation of modern life with the seemingly contradictory objectives of formalism. Sickert was friends with Degas, and the composition of many of his pictures, as if seen through a door or from the wings, shows the French artist's influence. Sickert studied with Whistler, and it was while helping to print Whistler's Venetian etchings that he was inspired to travel and tackle the subject himself. Beginning in 1895, Sickert spent numerous periods in Venice.

Although called *Palazzo Eleanora Duse*, the image in fact shows the Palazzo Dario to the right, and to the left, the Palazzo Barbaro-Wolkoff, in which the famed actress Eleanora Duse (1858–1924) had an apartment. Sickert's love of the theater is well known and may have prompted the title of this work. During his periods in Italy, Sickert painted outdoors; this view was most likely captured from a boat. The scene and viewpoint, from near the Palazzo Corner della Ca' Grande, is the same as that in Monet's *Palazzo Dario*, which was painted just a few years later, in 1908.

Although Sickert painted traditionally grand and popular Venetian views such as San Marco and Santa Maria della Salute, this image has a faintly shabby air, which reflects his interest in the less conventionally picturesque, accentuated by an absence of architectural detail on either building. Most curious are the areas of brown where the intricate marble roundels that characterize the right-hand side of the facade should be. The roundels underwent renovation in 1905–06, and it is possible therefore that Sickert shows them boarded up and ready for



Claude Monet, *The Palazzo Dario*, 1908. Oil on canvas, 36 3/8 x 28 3/4 in. National Museum Wales; Miss Margaret S. Davies Bequest, 1963 (NMWA 2481)

their restoration.[1] However, circular forms in the underpainting suggest, equally possibly, that Sickert either painted them in initially or was merely looking to give just an impression of them to maintain the picture's formal integrity.[2] In either case, while most artists before and at this time painted a "fantasy" Venice, Sickert shows a truer picture of faded grandeur, a city effectively in decline. However, his depiction of the Venetian light as it bounces off the sides of the buildings is spectacular, revealing his affection for the place he described as "the loveliest city in the world."[3]

1. Evans, *Impressions of Venice from Turner to Monet*, p. 60.
2. Alessandro Bettagno,*Venezia da stato a mito* (Venice: Fondazione Giorgio Cini/Marsilio, 1997), p. 382.
3. Matthew Sturgis, *Walter Sickert: A Life* (London: HarperCollins, 2005), p. 223.

11. Paul Signac (1863–1935)

***St. Tropez*, 1918**
Watercolor and crayon on wove paper
10 5/8 x 16 in.
National Museum of Wales; Miss Gwendoline E. Davies Bequest, 1951 (NMWA 1710)

By adolescence, Paul Signac had already shown an interest in the paintings of the Impressionists. He visited avant-garde exhibitions and later said that it was the paintings of Claude Monet, which he had seen at an exhibition in 1880, that had led him to become an artist. Signac had no formal training but instead taught himself through the study of other artists. He enjoyed painting en plein air and chose subjects with personal associations, such as Montmartre in Paris, a district famous for its bohemian artists and writers, where he had lived as a child and a young man. He was soon executing and exhibiting paintings in the Impressionist style. In 1884, at the inaugural meeting of the Société des Artistes Indépendants, an exhibiting organization set up to rival the Salon in Paris, he met Georges Seurat; this meeting was to have a profound impact on his work. Signac was highly impressed with Seurat's theories of color and soon became a dedicated follower. Both Seurat and Signac participated in the eighth and final Impressionist exhibition in 1886; however, the work of both artists moved beyond Impressionism. Signac experimented with developing their shared style of Divisionism, in which small dabs of pure color (they used no earth colors) are placed side by side and as a result combine and blend in the viewer's eye. This became known as Pointillism or Neo-Impressionism, a style for which Seurat is the best-known exponent.

Signac was influenced by a number of other contemporary artists. In 1885, he met Pissarro, with whom he corresponded about the development of the Neo-Impressionist style and watercolor painting. He also worked with van Gogh in Paris in 1887. He set out his theory of art in his book *D'Eugène Delacroix au Néo-impressionisme* (1899). Its examination of the purity of color, Divisionism, and the theory of color opposites attracted much attention among young artists as an explanation of Neo-Impressionism. Signac was to influence numerous younger artists, including Matisse, who stayed with him in St. Tropez (located on the French Riviera in the area of Provence in southern France) in 1904.

By the 1890s, Signac was making his first serious attempts at watercolor painting, and by 1892, he began to exhibit. His watercolors and drawings were always as important to him as his oil paintings, and his first one-

Discussion Questions

1. Describe Signac's use of color. What colors are most prominent? Do you see these colors in nature?
2. What time of day do you think is depicted? Why?
3. Do you see areas where the artist has left the paper visible? Why do you think he did that? What is the effect?
4. Why do you think Signac used watercolors to paint this scene? Are there any qualities of this medium that make it appropriate for this type of a scene?

Activity: Writing a Poem

Aim: To encourage students to take the time to carefully observe the painting and to help students articulate their observations in writing

Materials: paper and pencil

Procedure:

1. Ask students to look at the scene in this watercolor and imagine that they are actually at the site depicted.
2. Have students write a poem that captures their observations and emotions and expresses how they think it would feel to be there.

man show in 1894 was composed of watercolors. The critics praised these works for their simplicity and vibrancy. Signac divided his time between Paris and the south of France, where he endlessly painted harbor scenes and seascapes. He was also a keen sailor and would travel the coast, making watercolors along the way.

This watercolor postdates the artist's experiments with Pointillism. He has still juxtaposed bright, pure colors but in short strokes rather than dots; the result is a light yet vivid view that is typical of his watercolor style. It is inscribed *St Tropez* on the bottom left. By 1913, Signac had separated from his wife and left her their villa in St. Tropez to base himself in Antibes, which is also on the French Riviera.

12. Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775–1851)

The Storm, ca. 1840–45
Oil on canvas
12 ¾ x 21 ⅛ in.
National Museum of Wales; Miss Margaret S. Davies Bequest, 1963
(NMWA 509)

One of Britain's greatest artists, Joseph Mallord William Turner is as renowned for his mastery of the medium of watercolor as for his paintings in oils. He transformed the use of watercolor, developing new techniques to create luminous and vibrant works. With its loose style, contemporary subject matter, and thick paint, the work of Turner helped to lay the foundation for Impressionism.

Turner's early artistic talent was encouraged by his father, who exhibited his drawings in his barbershop window (his father remained a devoted supporter and, later, was his son's studio assistant). He entered the Royal Academy of Art school in 1789, at age fourteen. He exhibited his first oil painting in 1796 and thereafter exhibited at the Academy nearly every year for the rest of his life, remaining consistently involved in the Academy throughout his career. An avid traveler, Turner made numerous tours around Britain and Europe throughout his life. He spent nearly every summer touring with his sketchbooks, creating sketches for future works to be completed at home during the winter.

Turner painted images of the sea throughout his entire career, and in his later marine scenes such as *The Storm*, he produced some highly dramatic images that are the embodiment of the sublime (a term often used to describe the incomparable greatness of nature and its vastness). The present work depicts a storm-tossed sea, with the wreck of a boat in the foreground being engulfed by waves, its ropes flailing like tentacles. The sails, which have come adrift, can be seen to the left, while the masts and bow of a larger vessel are silhouetted against the skyline. A group of figures huddle together at the back of the stricken vessel, or possibly in a separate boat. The overwhelming sensation is of a combination of spray, mist, and wind through which only colors and vague forms are visible. The light source that emanates from the upper right of the canvas renders the sea in the lower left a deep, dark, terrifying green. In *The Storm*, parts of the canvas are virtually **non-representational**. Instead, brushstrokes, light, and color combine to evoke the sense of a tempest at sea.

Discussion Questions

1. Describe the light in this painting. Can you see where it is coming from? Can you see where the sea ends and the sky begins?
2. Describe the scene depicted in this painting by Turner. What is the focus of the painting? What do you think Turner was trying to communicate?
3. Turner painted a number of storms at sea. Why do you think this subject matter appealed to him?
4. Turner was an important influence on the Impressionists. Why do you think they were inspired by his paintings? How is this painting related to Impressionism?

Activity: Illustrating the Power of Nature

Aim: To help students consider the strengths of different media for expressing their ideas

Materials: various

Procedure:

1. Discuss with the class instances that illustrate how powerful nature is and their experiences with these situations.
2. Ask students to create an artwork, film, poem, or news article to communicate their views on the power of nature. Encourage them to be creative about the form they choose to work in.
3. Have students share their final projects with the class.

Turner depicted a number of anonymous storms, but the label on the back of this work reads, "Said to have been painted by Turner during the Storm which raged on the day in which the Princess Royal was born, Nov 21 1840." This statement is impossible to verify, though it would have been the sort of theme that would appeal to Turner, who may have heard of it from contemporary accounts.[1]

1. Martin Butlin and Evelyn Joll, *The Paintings of J.M.W. Turner* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 292.

Discussion Questions

1. Describe van Gogh's *Rain–Auvers*. What do you see?
2. Notice van Gogh's use of color. What two colors are the most dominant? Within these areas, do you see other colors, or is it one flat color?
3. Van Gogh was inspired by Japanese woodcut prints. Is there anything about this painting that suggests this influence? Explain.
4. Van Gogh was interested in communicating emotion. What emotions do you think this painting portrays?
5. Share the excerpt of the poem by Longfellow (right) with the class. How does this poem relate to van Gogh's painting? Explain.

Activity: Illustrating a Poem

Aim: To help students understand connections between word and image and to experiment with incorporating a narrative into a painting

Materials: paint, paintbrushes, paper, board or canvas, poetry books

Procedure:

1. Ask students to choose a poem to illustrate with a painting. Provide some suggestions for poets they might want to consider, such as Longfellow. Ask students to keep their poems to themselves and not tell classmates what they have chosen.
2. Encourage students to think about the emotions, mood, and subject matter in the poems they have chosen. Ask students to try to convey these things in their paintings.
3. Display all of the paintings in the classroom and have students randomly read one of the poems chosen. Ask the rest of the class to guess which painting matches with the poem.

13. Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890)

***Rain–Auvers*, 1890**
Oil on canvas
19¾ x 39½ inches
National Museum of Wales; Miss Gwendoline E. Davies Bequest (NMWA 2463)

In 1890, Vincent van Gogh moved north from the Saint-Rémy asylum in Provence to the town of Auvers-sur-Oise, north of Paris, where he stayed at the Café Ravoux. During the last month of his life, he painted thirteen double-square canvases of the countryside around Auvers. This stirring image conveys a sense of solitude through its open, panoramic composition. The flying crows and lines of rain, rendered in thick, graphic lines on the foreground picture plane, further add to the evocative sense of the work. In a letter to his brother at the time, van Gogh wrote, "the crows flying in circles over the fields give the feeling of sadness and utter loneliness." He describes "vast fields of wheat beneath troubled skies,"[1] in which he had "not hesitated to express sadness, extreme solitude."[2]

Rain–Auvers is a particularly bleak scene. It has been suggested that the atmosphere recalls one of van Gogh's favorite poems, "The Rainy Day" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow,[3] which begins "My life is cold, and dark, and dreary/It rains and the wind is never weary," and ends:

> Be still, sad heart! and cease repining;
> Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;
> Thy fate is the common fate of all,
> Into each life some rain must fall,
> Some days must be dark and dreary.

While the Longfellow poem is indeed gloomy, the final stanza is tinged with a certain optimism—something van Gogh himself lacked. Fearing that he was a burden to his brother, Theo, he shot himself on July 27, just weeks after completing this painting.

This painting demonstrates van Gogh's interest in Japanese print tech-

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1. Quoted in Ronald Pickvance, *Van Gogh in Saint-Rémy and Auvers*, exhib. cat. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986), p. 271.
2. Quoted in Jan Hulsker, *New Complete Van Gogh: Paintings, Drawings, Sketches, Revised and Enlarged Edition of the Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of Vincent van Gogh* (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Co., 1996), p. 476.
3. Evert van Uitert, Louis van Tilborgh, and Sjraar van Heugten, et al., *Vincent van Gogh*, exhib. cat. (Milan: Mondadori Arte, 1990), addendum.

niques, which he had first encountered in Antwerp in 1885. Following his move to Paris in 1886, he began to collect ukiyo-e prints, and in 1887 he made a copy of Hiroshige's *Sudden Shower Over Shin-Ōhashi Bridge and Atake,* gaining some insight into how to describe the sensation of rain through the medium of paint. This was first incorporated into his oil painting in *Rain* (Philadelphia Museum of Art), which was made between November 1889 and early 1890, showing the landscape of St. Remy.[4] In the present work, which is painted on a double canvas, van Gogh illustrates the driving, windblown rain through bold downward strokes that cut through the surface texture. The influence of Japanese prints can also be seen in the division of the picture plane into blocks of color, demarcating the fields, village, and sky. The distinctive row of poplars seen in the center of the canvas, surrounding the town no longer exists.[5]

Hiroshige (1797–1858), *Sudden Shower Over Shin-Ōhashi Bridge and Atake*, 1857. Woodblock print. From "One Hundred Famous Views of Edo." The Brooklyn Museum

Activity: Understanding Relief Printing

Aim: To learn about the process of making a woodblock-type print

Materials: foam-core cut into shapes, large sheets of cardboard or foam-core, glue, X-Acto knife (for the teacher's use), roller, water-based printmaking ink or poster paint, paper

Procedure:

1. Van Gogh was inspired by Japanese woodcut prints. Show the class some examples by the Japanese artist Hiroshige.
2. Have students draw large, simple shapes on a sheet of paper. Older students may draw the shapes on foam-core or cardboard.
3. Have students cut out the shapes. (With elementary-aged and younger students, teachers should cut the shapes for this activity. Place the students' drawings over sheets of foam-core and cut out pieces of foam-core in these abstract shapes or prepare some shapes ahead of time for students to choose from.)
4. Have students arrange and glue the cutout shapes onto a piece of cardboard or foam-core.
5. Instruct students on how to use the roller. Have them use the roller to apply ink to the raised pieces of foam-core.
6. Have students press a sheet of paper onto the inked surfaces.
7. Explain how the final effect is similar to a woodcut but how the process of carving an actual woodblock involves cutting away the areas around the main design and, in some cases, also carving into the areas within the shapes.

4. Pickvance, *Van Gogh in Saint-Rémy and Auvers*, p. 139.
5. Alaine Mothe, *Vincent van Gogh à Auvers-sur-Oise* (Paris: Editions du Valhermeil, 1987), p. 117.

1775 Joseph Mallord William Turner born

1796 Camille Corot born; Turner exhibits *Fishermen at Sea* at the Royal Academy

1808 Honoré Daumier born

1814 Jean-François Millet born

1824 Eugène Boudin born

1830 Camille Pissarro born; Daumier paints *The Night Walkers*

1832 Edouard Manet born

1834 Edgar Degas born

1836 The Arc de Triomphe is unveiled at the Place d'Etoile in Paris

1839 Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre (1787–1851) exhibits a photographic image that he calls a daguerreotype; Paul Cézanne born

1840 Claude Monet and Auguste Rodin born; Turner begins painting *The Storm*

1841 Frédéric Bazille, Berthe Morisot, and Pierre-Auguste Renoir born

1844 Mary Cassatt born

1848 Revolution begins in France and spreads throughout Europe; Louis Napoleon III elected President and Second Republic established; Paul Gauguin born

1850 King Louis-Philippe of France dies

1851 Louis Napoleon III conducts parliamentary coup d'état that strips power from French legislature and ends Second Republic

1852 Napoleon III proclaims Second Empire; imperial order reinstated; Baron Georges Haussmann redesigns layout of Paris under order of Napoleon III

1853 Vincent van Gogh born

1854 Millet begins painting *The Goose Girl at Gruchy*

1855 Exposition Universelle de Paris, first international fair to include a substantial section devoted to the arts

1857 Millet paints *The Gleaners*

1859 Georges Seurat born

1860 Walter Richard Sickert born

1862 Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* is published

1863 Paul Signac born; Manet paints *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe* (The Luncheon on the Grass)

1864 The official Salon becomes an annual event; Manet is rejected from the Salon while Morisot and Renoir are included; the right to strike becomes legalized in France

1865 Degas, Monet, Morisot, Pissarro, and Renoir exhibit at the Salon; Manet exhibits *Olympia*

1867 Pierre Bonnard born

1868 Impressionist paintings admitted to the official Salon; Cézanne is rejected from the Salon

1869 Manet and friends frequent the Café Guerbois in Batignolles, which becomes a popular gathering place for artists; Henri Matisse born; Boudin paints *Bathers on the Beach at Trouville*

1870 Outbreak of Franco-Prussian War; Napoleon III capitulates, and Third Republic proclaimed; Prussians begin siege; Louis Pasteur discovers the existence of living germs and bacteria; Manet joins the National Guard; Corot paints *Distant View of Corbeil*

1871 January 18: William, King of Prussia, crowns himself Emperor of Germany in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles

January 28: France is defeated and the armistice signed

March 18: The Commune of Paris is established and remains in power for two months; civil war ensues and approximately 30,000 people die

May: France and Germany sign treaty in Frankfurt; German army allowed to march victoriously through Paris; the Communards pull down the Vendôme Column; the former government reclaims Paris from the Communards

1872–73 Monet paints *Impression: Sunrise*

1874 Two weeks before the Salon, thirty artists exhibit 165 works of art at the first exhibition of the Société anonyme des peintres, sculpteurs, et graveurs, organized by Degas, Monet, Morisot, Pissarro, and Renoir, among others, and held at the studio of photographer Nadar; Manet paints *Argenteuil—Boats* and Renoir paints *La Parisienne*

1876 The second group exhibition of the Impressionists is held at the gallery of Paul Durand-Ruel; Renoir paints *Dance at Le Moulin de la Galette;* Edgar Degas paints *L'Absinthe*

1877 Third Impressionist exhibition is held; artists begin gathering regularly at Café de la Nouvelle-Athènes; Cézanne paints *The François Zola Dam*

1879 Fourth Impressionist exhibition is held

1880 Fifth Impressionist exhibition is held; Rodin sculpts *The Thinker;* Emile Zola's *Nana* is published

1881 Sixth Impressionist exhibition is held; Pablo Picasso born

1882 Seventh Impressionist exhibition is held; the Union Générale files for bankruptcy, devastating French economy; Morisot paints *At Bougival*

1884 Seurat begins painting *Sunday Afternoon on the Island of the Grand Jatte*

1885 Pasteur develops vaccine against rabies; Zola's *Germinal* is published

1886 Eighth and final Impressionist exhibition held; van Gogh arrives in Paris; Zola's *L'Oeuvre* (The Masterpiece) is published; "Le Symbolism," the Symbolist manifesto of the Greek poet, essayist, and art critic Jean Moréas is published in the periodical *Le Figaro*

1888 Formation of the Nabis group, including the artists Pierre Bonnard, Maurice Denis, and Edouard Vuillard

1889 Eiffel Tower opens; more than 30 million people visit the Exposition Universelle de Paris

1890 Van Gogh paints *Rain–Auvers* and weeks after he finishes commits suicide

1891 Monet's *Haystacks* series shown in Durand-Ruel's gallery

1901 Sickert paints *Palazzo Eleanora Duse, Venice*

1902 Monet paints *Charing Cross Bridge*

1905 Derain, Matisse, and Maurice de Vlaminck, among others, exhibit together at the Salon d'Automne; Louis Vauxcelles coins the term *fauve* (wild beast) in his review of the exhibition

1914 World War I begins

1918 World War I ends

1920 Bonnard paints *Sunlight at Vernon*

avant-garde (French for "advanced guard")
Venturing away from the current mainstream, often experimental in nature. May be applied to art or artists who are producing this type of work.

academic art
Art that adheres to the tradition of drawing, painting, and sculpture taught at the academies, or art schools, of Europe. First established in Renaissance Italy, academies flourished in the nineteenth century and prescribed strict guidelines for the production of works of art. Nearly every city in Europe, and, later, the United States, Australia, and Latin America, developed an art academy that set similarly high standards. The most important academy of the modern period, and the one upon which many others modeled themselves after, was the French Academy, founded in 1648. During most of the nineteenth century, this institution oversaw the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and controlled the official exhibitions known as Salons. The term *academic* has also been used to refer to conservative forms of art that ignore the innovations of modernism. Prominent academic artists include Auguste Bonheur, William-Adolphe Bouguereau, Alexandre Cabanel, and Jean-Léon Gérôme.

Barbizon school
A mid-nineteenth-century school of landscape painting named after the village in northern France where most of the school's painters lived. Devoted to accurate representation of the working class in their paintings, the Barbizon artists include Jean-François Millet and Theodore Rousseau.

composition
The arrangement of forms in a work of art.

Divisionism
A technique used by the Neo-Impressionists, characterized by a scientific approach to color and systematic application of paint on canvas in order to achieve certain optical effects. Georges Seurat and his followers were inspired by Ogden Rood's *Modern Chromatics* (1879) and M. E. Chevreul's writings on color reactions, *The Laws of Contrast of Colour* (1861). They defined simultaneous contrast ("two color areas placed side by side tend to exaggerate their differences, and if complementaries, they acquire an unusual brilliance") and successive contrast ("that one color area will fatigue the eye after a moment and induce an after-image or surrounding halo of the color-opposite"). The term *Divisionism* is sometimes used interchangeably with Pointillism, although the latter refers more specifically to points or dots of color.

en plein air (French for "in the open air")
An expression used to describe painting in the outdoors from direct observation rather than in the studio from photographs or sketches.

Fauvism
A movement in painting begun by André Derain, Henri Matisse, Maurice de Vlaminck, and others working in a similar style between the years 1905 and 1908. These artists exhibited together in 1905 at the Salon d'Automne and became known as the Fauves (wild beasts) because of their unconventional use of bold, strident color. A review by Louis Vauxcelles included a statement that ultimately led to the adoption of the name by both artists and critics. The Fauves focused on the use of color toward an expressive end rather than as a means to reproduce what they observed around them.

form
The formal elements of a work of art, including line, composition, space, and color. Form refers to the shapes and structural elements of a work of art.

genre scene
A type of painting showing scenes from everyday life or domestic subject matter, particularly popular in the seventeenth-century Netherlands.

Impressionism
A style of painting practiced by a group of artists working in France from the 1860s through the 1880s who exhibited together and shared a similar artistic sensibility. Among the thirty artists who participated in the first Impressionist exhibition in April of 1874 was Claude Monet, who exhibited *Impression: Sunrise*. The critic Louis Leroy appropriated the word in a pejorative way, using the word *impressionist* in his review of the exhibition to describe the sketchiness of the works. Characteristics of Impressionism include the omission of detail, loose brushwork, and unblended pure color. The Impressionists' primary focus was on capturing the artist's visual experience of a particular moment in time.

medium
The materials used by an artist, such as oil paint and canvas. Also the mode of expression employed by an artist, such as sculpture, painting, or photography.

modernism

A term introduced in the twentieth century, referring to an emphasis on formal qualities such as shape, form, line, and color, as opposed to iconographical, historical, or biographical content.

Nabis

A group of French artists, inspired by the Symbolist art of Paul Gauguin and his expressive use of flat color and rhythmic pattern, who exhibited together between 1892 and 1899. Paul Sérusier was the group's driving force and Maurice Denis its main theorist. Other members included Bonnard, Maillol, Vallotton, Vuillard, and the Dutchman Jan Verkade. They worked in a wide range of media—painting, book illustration, posters, stained glass, and theater decor. The term *Nabis*, coined by the poet Henri Cazalis, is derived from the Hebrew word for "prophets."

Neo-Impressionism

Also called Pointillism or Divisionism, a style of painting characterized by its scientific approach to color and systematic application of paint to canvas. In 1886, Georges Seurat, Paul Signac, Camille Pissarro, and his son Lucien Pissarro pioneered this new painting technique. By 1887, Charles Angrand, Henri-Edmond Cross, Albert Dubois-Pillet, Léo Gausson, Louis Hayet, and Maximilien Luce had joined in this new stylistic venture.

non-representational

A term relating to art that does not depict objects in the natural world but instead depicts pure color and form; nonobjective.

perspective

A mathematically-based system for representing three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface, making objects in the distance appear smaller and those closest to the viewer in the foreground appear larger.

pictorial space

The illusion of space, whether two- or three-dimensional, created by an artist on the two-dimensional surface of canvas, paper, or wood.

picture plane

In perspective, the flat surface used by an artist as a starting point for building a three-dimensional illusion on a two-dimensional surface. The picture plane is not the medium itself, such as the paper or canvas, but an imaginary surface, almost like a sheet of glass or an invisible field, on which elements such as spatial illusion and forms are created by the artist.

Pointillism

A technique employed by Georges Seurat, Paul Signac, and other Neo-Impressionists in which the placement and organization of small dots of pure color cause the colors to "mix" in the eye of the viewer rather than on the palette. Also referred to as Divisionism.

Post-Impressionism

A term covering a range of artistic styles that followed Impressionism at the end of the 1800s. Cézanne, Gauguin, and van Gogh are regarded as the most important and influential of the Post-Impressionists, closely followed by Georges Seurat. Instead of painting what they saw before them as the Impressionists did, the Post-Impressionists tended to adopt a more subjective approach, painting in a way that suited their own expressive ends. The term *Post-Impressionist* was first used in 1910 by the British art critic Roger Fry, in the title *Manet and the Post-Impressionists,* an exhibition he organized at the Grafton Galleries, London.

Realism

In the visual arts, the depiction of subjects as they appear in everyday life, without embellishment or interpretation. The term also refers to the artistic movement that began in France in the 1850s and grew with the introduction of photography. Realists positioned themselves against Romanticism, a genre that dominated French literature and artwork in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Realist artists like Courbet, Honoré Daumier, and Millet painted lower-class subjects, such as peasants and laborers, in a manner that aimed at verisimilitude. Manet and Degas also adopted the term to describe their art, which focused on scenes of contemporary life. Realists based their work on their own observations of their immediate environment rather than on imagined scenarios of classical themes or historical events.

Romanticism

An artistic and intellectual movement that emerged in Europe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and which places greater emphasis on feeling and imagination than on reason, celebrates the individual over society, and favors nature over the city.

Symbolism

An art movement linked to a late nineteenth-century group of French poets led by Charles Baudelaire. In their exploration of dream-like subjects, the Symbolists shared a common interest in mystical and spiritual expression in their art and an opposition to Realism and Naturalism. The symbols used are not the familiar emblems of mainstream iconography but intensely personal, private, obscure, and often ambiguous references. There are several disparate groups of Symbolist painters spanning a broad geographical area from France and Russia to Mexico and the United States. Among them are Henri Fantin-Latour, Frida Kahlo, Gustav Klimt, Edvard Munch, Maxfield Parrish, and Odilon Redon. More a philosophy than an actual style of art, the Symbolist painters influenced Surrealism, the contemporary Art Nouveau movement, and the Nabis.

ukiyo-e

Japanese woodblock prints that depict familiar scenes of daily life. The compositions typically incorporate areas of flat color, dramatic cropping, and unusual perspectives.

Woodcut

A technique for making a print in which the surface of a block of wood is carved so that the design stands out. The drawing is executed on a smooth block of softwood, and the areas around the design are carved out. A sheet of paper is placed over the inked block, and pressure is applied by either using a dabber or placing the block and paper in a press. (Today, woodcuts are inked with brayers, a type of roller, whereas prior to the nineteenth century, leather dabbers were used.)

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Web Resources:

General

A map of the regions depicted in the selected paintings: http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&msid=111582589411011011551.00045368a0648157ef218&t=h&z=6

Art Institute of Chicago – Art Access: section on Impressionism and Post-Impressionism includes glossary, lesson plans, family activities, books and media, and maps
http://www.artic.edu/artaccess/AA_Impressionist/index.html

Art Institute of Chicago—ArtExplorer: Turner to Cézanne Scrapbook containing materials directly related to the works in this resource
http://www.artic.edu/artexplorer/viewbook.php?vbook=zaqoordldpole

Tate Modern—"Turner Worldwide": lists where Turner works are located across the globe (in public and private collections)
http://www.tate.org.uk/servlet/BrowseGroup?cgroupid=999999953

National Gallery of Art—Teacher Guides and Educational Tools
The Impressionists at Argenteuil – http://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/impr_intro.htm
Picturing France - http://www.nga.gov/education/classroom/france/

Davies Sisters
http://www.museumwales.ac.uk/en/rhagor/article/?article_id=116
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